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- 1. A method of alleviating problems associated with delays in accessing
- data on a network, comprising the steps of:
- 3 (a) accessing data on a network from a client computer;
- 4 (b) identifying when a delay occurs during the accessing step; and
- 5 (c) presenting filler contents on the client computer during the identified delay,
- 6 wherein the filler contents are customized to a user's taste.
- 1 2. The method of claim 1 above, wherein the filler contents are pre-
- 2 selected.
- 1 3. The method of claim 1 above, wherein the filler contents are selected
- 2 from a group comprising text data, graphics data, audio data, and audiovisual data.
- 1 4. The method of claim 1 above, wherein the filler contents are selected
- 2 from a group comprising static filler contents and dynamic filler contents.

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- 5. The method of claim 1 above, further comprising the step of automatically selecting the filler content based on predetermined criteria.
- 1 6. The method of claim 5 above, wherein the filler contents are selected
- 2 based on the accessed data.



- The method of claim 1 above, wherein the filler contents are stored on
- 2 the client computer.
  - 8. The method of claim 7 above, further comprising the step of storing the filler contents in a repository on the client computer.
- 1 9. The method of claim 1 above, wherein the filler contents are stored on a
- 2 server computer connected to the network.
  - 10. The method of claim 9 above, further comprising the step of retrieving the filler content from the server computer connected to the network.
- 1 11. The method of claim 1 above, wherein the identifying step is performed
- 2 either at the client computer or at a server computer connected to the network
- 1 12. The method of claim 1 above, wherein the presenting step further
- 2 comprises the step of presenting the filler contents without interrupting the accessing
- 3 of the data from the network.



1 13.	The method of claim	l above, further co	mprising the step of

- deactivating the presenting step when the accessing of the data on the network is
- 3 complete
- 1 14. A computer program carrier readable by a computer and embodying
- 2 one or more instructions that executable by the computer to perform method steps for
- 3 alleviating problems associated with delays in accessing data on a network, the method
- 4 comprising the steps of:
- 5 (a) accessing data on a network from a client computer;
- 6 (b) identifying when a delay occurs during the accessing step; and
- 7 (c) presenting filler contents on the client computer during the identified delay,
- 8 wherein the filler contents are customized to a user's taste.
  - 15. An apparatus for alleviating problems associated with delays in accessing data on a network, comprising:
    - (a) a client computer connected to the network;
- 4 (b) a browser, executed by the client computer, for accessing data on the
- 5 network; and

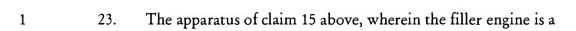
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- 6 (c) a filler engine, executed by the client computer, for presenting filler content
- 7 on the client computer when a delay occurs in the accessing of the data on the
- 8 network, , wherein the filler contents are customized to a user's taste.

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- 1 16. The apparatus of claim 15 above, further comprising a content receiver
- 2 for retrieving the filler content from a server on the network.
- 1 The apparatus of claim 16 above, wherein the filler engine requests the
- 2 filler contents from the content receiver and the content receiver retrieves the filler
- 3 contents from a server on the network for the filler engine.
- 1 18. The apparatus of claim 15 above, further comprising a repository, stored
- 2 on the client computer, for storing the filler contents.
  - 19. The apparatus of claim 18 above, further comprising a content receiver for retrieving the filler content from a server on the network and for storing the retrieved filler content in the repository.
- 1 20. The apparatus of claim 19 above, wherein the filler engine further
- 2 comprises means for retrieving the filler content from the repository.
- 1 21. The apparatus of claim 15 above, wherein the filler engine further
- 2 comprises means for initiating use of the filler content when appropriate.
- 1 22. The apparatus of claim 15 above, wherein the filler engine is an
- 2 extension to the browser.



- 2 component separate from the browser.
- 1 24. The apparatus of claim 15 above, wherein the filler engine displays the
- 2 filler contents without interrupting the accessing of the data from the network.
- 1 25. The apparatus of claim 15 above, wherein the filler engine deactivates
- when the accessing of the data from the network is complete.
- 1 26. The apparatus of claim 15 above, wherein a server on the network
- 2 transmits the delay information through the browser to the filler engine and the filler
- 3 engine retrieves the filler contents from the repository in response thereto.